



The Shrine Messenger

Issue December 2011 No. 361

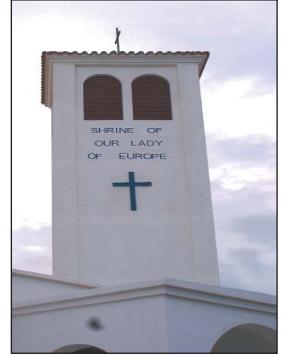


Shrine of Our Lady of Europe

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JESUS is The Reason for The Season!



It's that time of year again. December has come and with it all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail, turkey dinners with family and friends, stockings hanging in the living room, and shouts of "Merry

Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets? Is this really all that there is to Christmas?

For many people, Christmas is a time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends. Many are

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saddened at Christmastime when they think of their loved ones who will not be able to come home for various reasons. Turkey dinners may be only a wish and not a reality for many in many part of the world.

Yet, Christmas can be a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child. Luke 2: 4-19 says:

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go

to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."

Why did He come? Why did God send His Son to this sometimes cruel and hard world? He sent Jesus to us so that one day, He would grow up to become a very important part of history. His story (history) is one of truth, love, and hope. It brought salvation to all of us. Without Jesus, we would all die in our sins.

Jesus was born so one day the price could be paid for the things we have done that are wrong. One of my favourite quotes is: Jesus paid a debt He didn't owe because we owed a debt we couldn't pay! The Bible says that all have sinned. We are all born with a sin nature. We do things that do not please God. Through the sins of Adam and Eve, we have all inherited that sin nature. We need to have that removed. The only way is through Jesus. Jesus came so He could die on the cross for ALL of our sins. If we believe that Jesus died for our sins, we can ask Him to come into our hearts and forgive us. Christmas is a great time to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Then, we are clean and made whole. We can know that heaven is a place where we can go to when this life is over.

We can truly be happy at Christmas! No matter what may be happening, we can know that we are His children. We then become sons and daughters of God. Heaven will be our home one day.

Look at Christmas in a new way this year. This is the year to invite Jesus into your heart. You will then have a "Happy Christmas." The joy and peace you will receive will last all year as you look to God for all your needs to be met. A very Happy and Blessed and Joyful Christmas to all our readers.

Jesus Is The Reason For The Season! Rejoice!

Editorial



Dear Friends,

THE REAL MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Time flies and it is indeed incredible that Christmas is round the corner, so to speak. Once again I feel obliged to inform our readers of the real meaning of Christmas. Is Christmas the lights in the Christmas Tree, the gifts, the cards in the mail, the drinking and partying, the turkey dinners, the leg of pork, the Spanish ham, the endless shouts and greetings of Merry Christmas. How many people think about what they saying when they utter the words "Merry Christmas". Do they know that it means Mass of Christ and that we are celebrating the birth of our Saviour. Unfortunately many people equate Christmas to having a good time giving and receiving presents and forgetting about the birth of Christ.



But for many people Christmas is a time of sorrow. Some, because they don't have the money to buy food and presents, especially in other countries. Others are saddened at this time of the year because they have lost loved ones and their

memories brings sadness to what should be a happy season of celebration - the birth of Christ.

But despite all this, Christmas should be a time of great joy. It is the great gift that God sent to us by way of Son. His humble birth in a stable in Bethlehem brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men and angels shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. The prophets had predicted of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

I must also give some words of advice. When you decorate your homes with Christmas Trees and lights, tinsel and Christmas decorations, Father Christmas, stockings etc. etc., remember that the most important decoration is the Nativity Crib, to symbolize the real meaning of Christmas - the birth of Jesus Christ, Our Saviour, in a stable in Bethlehem.

God Bless you all.

Fr Charlie



A Lesson in Forgiveness



Whilst watching the news on TV, both my wife and I were moved to tears when the father of a murdered child was interviewed. The usual news on the situation in Libya and the European financial crisis were relegated in order of importance by this moving report. Mr Cardy spoke about his ordeal and reaction to the killing of his nine year old daughter.

It was in August 1981 that Jennifer Cardy disappeared after leaving her home at Balinderry in County Antrim to cycle to her friend's house nearby. After so many years a 64 year-old van driver, already convicted of killing three schoolgirls, has been found guilty of a fourth child murder. His name is Robert Black and is now known as Britain's most notorious serial killer.

The photograph above was issued by Police when she went missing in 1981.

Two young fishermen found her body floating in McKee's Dam near Hillsborough, off the main

Belfast-to-Dublin road, 15 miles from her home. A retired policeman, speaking on condition of anonymity, recalled the tragic events.

The prosecution presented a fuel receipt, a bonus paid to drivers and billboard poster deliveries as evidence that Black, a London-based driver, had been in Northern Ireland at the time.

Jurors heard audio recordings of police interviews, during which he admitted touring swimming pools and beaches to spy on children.

They were also given chilling details of his previous convictions.

Susan Maxwell (11) was abducted from Cornhill on Tweed in Scotland in July 1982; Caroline Hogg (5) from Portobello in Edinburgh in July 1983; and Sarah Harper (10) from Morley in Leeds in March 1986.

Mr Cardy (Jennifer's father) was interviewed by TV at the end of the trial when Robert Black was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. Mr Cardy spoke about the ordeal of having to endure the trial and listening to detailed explanations of his daughter's last moments of her life, so mercilessly ended by the murderer. He spoke about the support of his wife and family and more importantly about the fact that without his faith in God and Christian beliefs he could not have endured this ordeal. He spoke about how much he had missed his daughter but was happy that he would meet her again at resurrection.

Then he spoke about his thoughts when the murderer was led off the Court to start his fourth life sentence and said that he was not full of remorse but full of forgiveness and he prayed for his repentance and for God's forgiveness. Truly this must be a Lesson in Forgiveness for all of us.

European Marian Network - Annual Conference 2011



At the end of September, the Shrine's Rector, Mgr Charlie Azzopardi and Shrine Administrator Denis Hook attended the 2011 Annual Conference of the European Marian Network at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in UK.

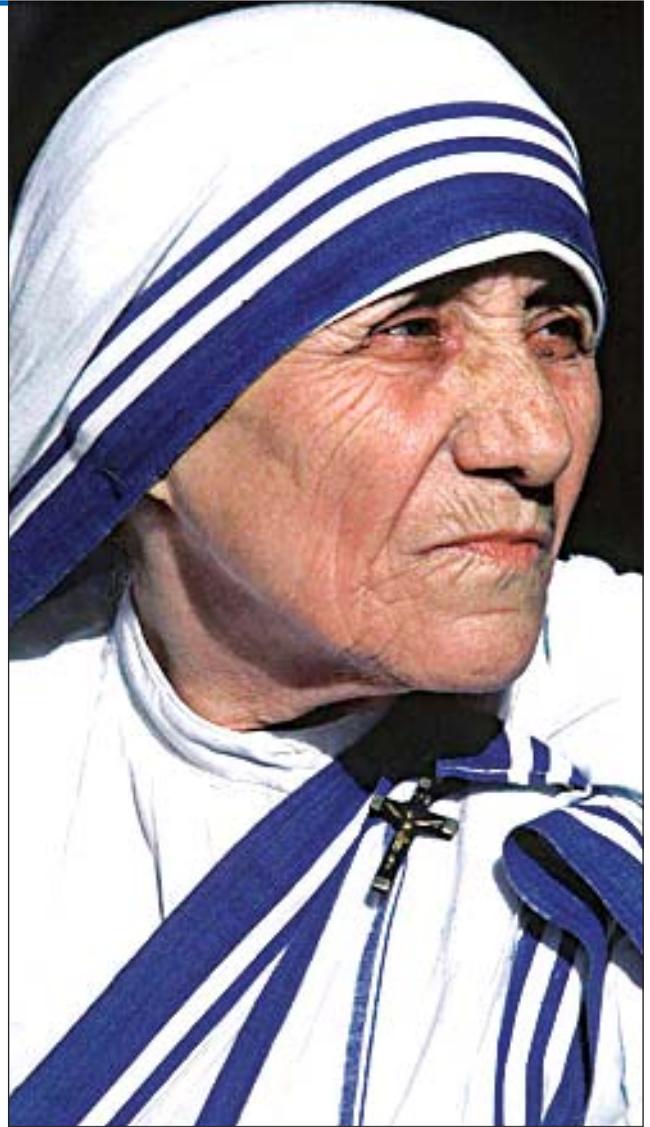


Open air Mass at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.



Statue of Our Lady of Walsingham





Do It Anyway

A Poem by Mother Teresa

People are often unreasonable,
illogical and self-centered;
Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind,
people may accuse you of selfish ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.
If you are successful,
you will win some false friends and true enemies;
Succeed anyway.
If you are honest and frank,
people may cheat you;
Be honest anyway.
What you spend years building,
someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness,
they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.
The good you do today,
people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have,
and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.
You see, in the final analysis,
it is between you and God;
It was never between you and them anyway.



My Morning at The Shrine



I have been part of the Shrine Team of Helpers for about two years. When a friend of mine rang to ask me whether I could help in the running of the Shrine, I was overjoyed. It came as a complete 'miracle'. I knew that I had finally arrived home after a long journey with Our Lady and now She was asking me if I could serve her at the Shrine.

What an honour and privilege! There aren't any words to describe the blessings we all receive when we are at the Shrine. We meet many visitors and pilgrims from all over the world and they all say how beautiful, tranquil and peaceful they feel at the Chapel in the Shrine. For me personally, it is a piece of Heaven on earth where I can pray for all of us and also light a candle as a symbol of prayer raising up to Almighty God through the intercession of Our Blessed Lady who is mother of Our Saviour, Queen of Heaven, Queen of Peace and Mother of us all.

I am writing these lines in the hope that it touches someone's heart as we need more volunteers to join our Team. So if you have a free morning or afternoon once a week, don't hesitate to come and talk to us and pray with us. You'll find out how very present Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother are in the Shrine!

May God richly bless you all.

A Shrine Helper

OUR LADY OF EUROPE



STATUES FOR SALE

£9.75 - £21.50 or £85.00

CATHEDRAL BOOKSHOP OR SHRINE SHOP

OUR LADY OF EUROPE



MEDALLIONS

£10 Cupro nickel
£40 Silver

CATHEDRAL BOOKSHOP OR ST. THERESA'S CHURCH

SERVICES AT SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF EUROPE

CULTO EN EL SANTUARIO DE NTRA. SRA. DE EUROPA

WEEKDAYS

Open from 10.00a.m. to 1.00p.m.
2.30p.m. to 6.00p.m.

SATURDAY

10a.m. to 1.00p.m.

SUNDAY

Closed

Holy Mass

Saturday 12 midday

Wednesday 7.00p.m.

Holy Rosary

First Saturday of the month at 11.30a.m.

BAPTISMS

By previous arrangement with your Parish Priest.
Please give at least one week's notice.

WEDDINGS

Three months notice is required.

CONFESSIONS

Before Mass or by request.

LUNES A VIERNES

abierto entre 10.00 de la mañana a 1.00 de la tarde.
y de 2.30 a 6.00 de la tarde.

SABADO

10.00 de la mañana a 1.00 de la tarde

DOMINGO

Cerrado

Santa Misa

Sábado 12 mediodía

Miércoles 7.00 de la tarde

Santo Rosario

Primer sábado del mes a las 11.30 de la mañana

BAUTIZOS

Contactando a su Párroco, con una semana de
aviso previo.

BODAS

Tres meses de notificación son necesarios

SACRAMENTO DE LA RECONCILIACION

Antes de Misa

(Para llegar al Santuario, Autobús Línea No. 3 desde la misma frontera)



SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF EUROPE

The Shrine's new web site is now up and running.

Web site is: www.ourladyofeurope.net
(best viewed with Java and Flash plug-ins).

God bless